

ABSTRACT

One embodiment of the invention provides a fully distributed, scaleable and modular rack architecture and management system. One feature of the invention provides device management throughout the rack system with a vertical interface column integrated into the rack cabinet. Within each rack unit (U) of the vertical interface column, the vertical interface column may deliver connectivity to a device housed within the rack cabinet thereby eliminating runs of cable typically necessary for management of such devices. The vertical interface column can be expanded as necessary to provide connectivity to more devices using hot-swappable interface modules. A rack management system allows both local and remote management access to all devices mounted in the rack cabinet and coupled to the vertical interface column. The rack management system may also access to devices mounted in other rack cabinets.